

From: C Pyrros
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/16/01 4:31pm
Subject: Microsoft settlement

Dear Justice Department,

I am deeply concerned about the settlement being proposed with Microsoft in the anti-trust matter. I do not believe the current settlement is sufficient to ensure a healthy, open, competitive environment in the future.

I have been working in the personal computer industry since 1985, and observed Microsoft's ruthless behavior first-hand.

In the late 80s and early 90s, there were several choices in desktop operating systems (DOS, OS/2, Windows, Macintosh), several choices in word processing software (WordStar, WordPerfect, Word), several choices in Internet Browsers (Mosaic, Navigator), and so on. As Microsoft gained market share, they unfairly used that influence to eliminate competition. Since Microsoft has so many revenue streams, they did, and still do, offer(ed) certain products at a total loss, for the sole purpose of eliminating their competition. Their bullying tactics have sent chills through the entire IT industry, and still exert a profound effect.

What happened to the other word processors? What happened to the other desktop operating systems? What happened to the other Internet browsers? In each case, Microsoft had the inferior product, yet somehow prevailed: WordPerfect was the better word processor, OS/2 the better operating system, Navigator the better browser, Novell the better file server; yet a combination of good marketing (quite legal), behind-the-scenes bullying (illegal), and unfairly written contracts (also illegal) gave Microsoft the unfair advantage.

When the free-market system operates correctly, price/performance tends to drive the better and more economical products to the top. This clearly did not happen anywhere that Microsoft was involved.

The Internet-WWW browser market is a key example. The WWW specification was specifically designed to be completely platform independent: any server operating system, any client operating system, and any browser software could be used, completely transparent to the end user. Due to Microsoft's bullying, this is no longer the case: Microsoft's products create web pages that only function properly with Microsoft's browser. Due to Microsoft's market share, and the dominance of the IE browser, it has now become very difficult for users of other browsers and operating systems (for example, Linux users) to complain to web site owners that the Microsoft-ified web site won't function with their Linux-based web

browser. The (Linux, OS/2, Nextstep, etc) user then has no choice but to use the Microsoft browser, on a Microsoft-supported operating system, if they want to use the Microsoft-ified web site.

Microsoft's rejection of the de-facto Sun Java standard leads to a new version of Microsoft's browser (Internet Explorer 6) that does not support Java, further compounding compatibility problems in the WWW space. Only a company as large as Microsoft can exert the weight necessary to incapacitate an open standard, and they appear to be succeeding.

I could also write pages on the billions of dollars in cost increases that the corporate world, and end users, have suffered due to incompetent Microsoft software. In thousands of cases, companies and individuals were forced to use the Microsoft product, despite its inferiority, due to unfair market practices. In the long run, these companies and users suffered a tremendous economic impact trying to use products that were not yet ready for public use.

As for the future, Microsoft is already behaving questionably in regard to the upcoming Tablet PC market. Articles on this matter can be found at www.wired.com that express the problem.

In order to ensure a competitive environment in the future I would propose the following:

That Microsoft be separated into the following divisions:

- Operating Systems (Windows 98, ME, XP, 2000, etc)
- Internet Products (Internet Explorer, Windows Media Player, etc)
- Application Products (Office, Word, Excel, Access, etc)
- Infrastructure Products (SQL Server, Mail, Outlook, etc)

I would also propose that Microsoft be forced to open portions of the Microsoft operating systems specifications, so that other application developers could enjoy that benefits that Microsoft applications have had for over a decade. Further protections would be necessary to prevent collusion between the different formerly-Microsoft companies after the separation.

My knowledge of this problem is not unique by any means, but please permit me if may to humbly express my background: I have been working in the IT industry since 1985, consulting to small clients as well as Fortune 500 customers, on issues including network design, the Internet, security, infrastructure, servers, and personal computers. I have been certified under respective programs by IBM, Microsoft, and Novell.

I appreciate your time and consideration in this matter. If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

C Pyrros, CLSE, MCP 2000, MCSE 3.51, CNE 5.0, MCNE 5.0
POB 14175
Chicago IL 60614
773 645 7475